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USEFUL

SUGGESTIONS

FAVOURABLE TO THE

COMFORT

OF THE

LABOURING PEOPLE,

AND TO

DECENT HOUSEKEEPERS.

EXPLAINING

HOW A SMALL INCOME MAY BE MADE TO GO FAR IN A FAMILY, SO AS TO OCCASION A CONSIDERABLE SAVING IN THE ARTICLE OF

BREAD.

A CIRCUMSTANCE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE TO BE KNOWN AT THE PRESENT JUNCTURE.

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SUGGESTIONS, &c.

IT has long been obſerved as a matter of regret by the friends of the poor, who have had acceſs to examine the modes of living which prevail in other parts of the kingdom, that the labouring people who have been chiefly bred in London, are deprived of many comforts which they might freely enjoy, were they acquainted with the various uſeful methods of dreſſing meat and vegetables, ſo as to make their earnings go as far as poſſible in a family, and thereby afford a wholeſome, palatable, and an abundant ſupply of ſavory and nouriſhing food, at a ſmall expence.

It is not many years ago, ſince the more opulent part of the people of London could be made to believe that ſoups were good and profitable in a family; and even now, except among the higher ranks, it is not a mode of cookery which generally prevails, although it is advancing very faſt; becauſe the ſecret is no ſooner diſcovered than it is adopted, and conſidered by all who have learned the true and proper method of making ſoups of meat and vegetables, as a

great acquiſition to every family, eſpecially where there are children.

So powerful is habit and cuſtom, that it is only a few years ſince ſoups were introduced into the workhouſes in London, and it will ſcarce be believed, that the rich and nouriſhing juices of the meat which intermixed with the water which boiled it, were generally thrown out and loſt.

A better knowledge of cookery, and a greater regard to the healths of the poor people have induced the managers of many workhouſes to ſave the water in which their meat has been boiled, and to make it into ſoup on the following day, with the addition of ſome bones to enrich it, and a mixture of ſuch vegetables as the ſeaſon of the year affords; by which means, at a very trifling additional expence, the poor people enjoy a moſt nouriſhing, palatable, and balſamic food, to which they were ſtrangers before; but which experience teaches them, after knowing it, to prefer to every thing elſe: and yet in the workhouſes this ſoup is not ſo good as it might be, by a proper diſtribution of ſavory vegetables and barley, which will be learnt hereafter.

The beſt and cheapeſt method of making a rich and nouriſhing ſoup is only known to the higher claſſes of people in London, with a very few exceptions, and therefore the object of the writer of theſe pages is to extend that knowledge, in all its branches, to the labourers, mechanics, and other decent houſekeepers, who have ſmall incomes and large families,

that

that they may thereby be enabled to live better themſelves, and to feed their children with as wholeſome a diet as the rich man's children enjoy, and that too at a ſmaller expence than they now incur.

At preſent, the labouring poor are not frequently known to purchaſe what is called the coarſer pieces of the different kinds of butcher's meat. Unſkilled in the nutritious qualities which attach to them, becauſe of their ignorance in cookery, they leave this kind of meat to be bought up at an inferior price by many of the higher claſſes, and they lay out their money in pieces for roaſting, where the bones perhaps enhances the price of the actual meat to 9d. or 10d. a pound, which is ſent to an oven to be baked, where the nouriſhing parts are dried up, and where all that a poor man can afford to purchaſe, perhaps does not half ſatisfy the appetites of himſelf and family.

Another method is to purchaſe bacon often of an inferior quality, perhaps at 9d. or 10d. per lb. and to deal out the greaſy unwholeſome morſel perhaps among a large family of children, which, when eat up, rather tends to whet the appetite than to ſatisfy it, and the conſequence is, that recourſe muſt be had to the ale-houſe for one or more pots of porter to *fill up*, which, after all, does not anſwer the purpoſe; while the expence of ſuch a dinner may be double the ſum that a wholeſome, palatable ſavory diſh of meat and ſoup, mixed with vegetables would coſt, with this advantage—that it would fill, and ſatisfy the ſtomach. It would leave no craving behind even for porter: a

certain

certain proportion of which would at leaſt be ſaved, and when a frugal man conſiders that two pots of porter in the courſe of a day, will be equal to 10l. 17s. 6d. a year, he will reflect that ſuch a ſaving will pay the rent of a comfortable houſe, or the ſchooling of three or four children, or will purchaſe decent cloaths both for a poor man, his wife and children, to laſt a year.

It is not, however, here meant that the labouring man, or his family ſhould deny themſelves their pot of porter, or occaſionally their roaſt meat when they have a deſire for it.—God forbid. The object of the information now conveyed is to ſhew them, that they can have more variety, and that many profitable, palatable, and beneficial diſhes may be afforded, by which they may live far better, and at leſs expence than they do at preſent. Nor can it be argued with truth, that the poor have not convenience for the ſort of diſhes which are now to be recommended, ſince all that is neceſſary is a ſtew-pan, and a little fire to cook every ſort of ſoup that can be made, and as the very pooreſt of the people generally boil a tea-kettle twice a day, they can with equal eaſe to themſelves boil meat and vegetables.

There are various kinds of excellent ſoups ſuited to each ſeaſon of the year, which frugal families chiefly in the country, who know how to live comfortably on a ſmall income, generally make a part of their food three or four times a week, adding ſome little article according to their circumſtances, and varying the kind of ſoup by way of change.

The following *Receipts* will ſhew how ſeveral of theſe Soups are made:

I. POTATOE SOUP.

Potatoe Soup is made by ſtewing about five pounds of the coarſeſt parts of beef or mutton, or even part of a bullock's head, in 10 quarts of water till half done; then pare the ſkin from the potatoes, and put a quantity in the ſtew-pan with the meat, together with ſome onions, pepper and ſalt. Stir it frequently, and when the potatoes are boiled ſufficiently, it will be found a very excellent diſh. If a few bones of beef are added, it will make the ſoup richer and a greater quantity may be made. The meat, when ſeaſoned with the onions and pepper, will eat extremely well along with that part of the potatoes which remain whole, and do not mix with the ſoup; and in this way a moſt comfortable meal for a large family is obtained without uſing any bread at all.—What is called the ſticking of the beef, which is rich and full of gravy, is the beſt meat for this kind of ſoup, becauſe there is no bone in it.

5lb. of this beef generally coſts 2d. a pound, but at preſent it will be $3\frac{1}{2}$d. in all	1	6
Bones to enrich the ſoup — —	0	4
24lb. of potatoes may now be bought for the price of a quartern loaf of bread, (which weighs 4lb. $5\frac{1}{2}$ oz.) and they will ſoon be much cheaper.—The coſt will be another	1	0
A bunch of onions will coſt, if good and large	0	4
Pepper and ſalt - - - -	0	4
Total expence of ingredients	3	6

This diſh will afford a ſavory, comfortable, and even a plentiful and wholeſome dinner to a family of 10 or 12 perſons, including children, at the expence of $3\frac{1}{2}$d. for each. It will fill the ſtomach with what will be found both palatable and nouriſhing; and it will prevent that deſire for large quantities of porter which always become neceſſary when the ſame ſum is expended in a dinner of baked meat, or of bacon and bread, which is not ſo wholeſome—leaves the ſtomach empty—creates a thirſt, and does not convey half the nouriſhment; and, in point of weight of food, the proportion for the ſame money is conſiderably above four-fold in favour of the potatoe ſoup and meat; a circumſtance well worth attending to by the middling, as well as the lower ranks in life—eſpecially where there are a number of children.

This calculation is made with a view to the preſent high prices of meat and vegetables.—In a ſhort time, potatoes will be at, or under one farthing a pound, and onions will be much cheaper and better, ſo as to afford a greater quantity, and thereby make the diſh more ſavory. Beef will alſo be cheaper, ſo that in place of $3\frac{1}{2}$d. a family may dine well at 2d. or $2\frac{1}{2}$d. a head.

II. BARLEY BROTH.

This diſh, when well made, is, of all others the moſt ſavory, rich, palatable, and nutritious that can be conceived. It admits almoſt of a mixture of every kind of vegetable that can be procured throughout the year, and it cannot be ſaid to be ever out of ſeaſon.

ſeaſon. The vegetables are parſley, common greens, cabbages, turnips, carrots, peaſe, beans, collards, and brocoli according to the ſeaſon, conſtantly attending to one rule however, that whatever other herbs are uſed, *onions* or *leeks*, and parſley if it can be had, muſt form a part of the ingredients, and the ſoup may be made thick or thin, according to the taſte of the perſon who uſes it. The clod and ſticking of the bullock makes the beſt barley broth, and it may alſo be enriched much by the addition of beef or marrow bones. Mutton is frequently uſed in this kind of ſoup, but it does not make it ſo rich or ſo good as beef, which may be uſed in larger or ſmaller quantities, according to circumſtances. A tea cupful of barley is ſufficient for a large family. What is called pearl barley is not ſo good as a larger ſort, which does not coſt half ſo much money, and may be purchaſed at about 3d. a pound or leſs.

The general rule for making this ſoup is as follows:

Take four quarts of water, four pounds of beef with bones, four ounces of barley, and ſo in proportion for a larger or ſmaller quantity.—— Stew the whole together for two hours, then put in ſuch pot herbs and greens as may be ſuitable to the ſeaſon, cut ſmall, with a proper quantity of ſalt, and let the whole boil until they are quite tender.—If neceſſary, ſcum the fat off that it may not be greaſy.—There may be more or leſs carrots, turnips, greens or peaſe,

according to the taſte of the parties; but onions or leeks, according to the ſeaſon, muſt not be omitted, as it gives the ſoup an excellent flavour.

This ſoup is generally taken without bread, and with the addition of a few potatoes, to be eaten afterwards with the boiled meat, makes an excellent meal, extremely good and wholeſome, where there are a number of children.

III. HODGE PODGE.

This kind of ſoup is reckoned ſtill more palatable than any of the former, but it is more expenſive, and can only be made during the ſeaſon of green peas.—It is made of mutton ſtewed, with parſley, young carrots, turnips, and green peaſe, with a few onions cut ſmall.—If well made, it is preferable to all other ſoups both in taſte and flavour.

Take a leg, loin, or neck of mutton, cut it in ſmall pieces, and boil it in ſix quarts of water for ſome time, then put in a quart of green peaſe, with young carrots, turnips, onions and parſley, with a proper quantity of ſalt, and let the whole boil gently till the vegetables are tender.

When meat and vegetables are cheap, this ſoup is within the reach of every houſekeeper, and is even acceſſible to the lower orders of the people, and when once tried, it will be found that there cannot be a greater luxury; the expence of a piece of meat, baked in an oven (the worſt of all modes of cookery) with the uſual appendages, will, at any time, procure this

this excellent diſh, which will go twice as far in a family, will be more palatable, convey double the nutriment, and is a moſt nouriſhing and wholeſome food for children. Potatoes, or bread may be eaten afterwards with the mutton. This kind of ſoup may alſo be conſiderably enriched by a piece of gravy beef, or good bones, which may be boiled along with the mutton.

IV. BEEF SOUP.

This kind of Soup is better known than any of the former: but neither ſo profitable nor uſeful to thoſe who have large families.——It is made by boiling Beef in water according to the quantity. When half done, ſcum the fat off, and add, carrots, turnips, and onions, cut ſmall, with a proper quantity of ſalt and ſome pepper-corns, and let the whole ſtew till properly reduced.

V. VEAL BROTH.

Stew a knuckle of veal with four or five quarts of water, to which may be added a little good bacon, or bacon ham, with ſalt, onions, parſley, and green peas, in the ſeaſon.—It will be found to be a very excellent ſoup; and the veal and bacon may be eaten together with potatoes and bread.

VI. PEASE SOUP.

This Soup is ſo generally known, that it is unneceſſary to explain how it is made: It is a very excellent ſoup, but in many reſpects inferior to ſome of the others, and more expenſive.

Theſe different ſoups form that change of diet

which is always agreeable, and experience will enable thoſe who uſe them to make improvements according to their own taſtes. The ſame experience will ſoon manifeſt their utility in improving the healths of every member of a family, both young and old, and after a little perſeverance, this mode of living will be preferred as the moſt palatable and conducive to real nouriſhment, as well as the moſt œconomical. An excellent and nutritious ſoup may alſo be made from Fiſh, which, when mixed with vegetables and onions, is a very palatable diſh; and will be found, if well made, not to have the leaſt taſte of fiſh. Money will be ſaved, by the uſe of theſe different kinds of Soups, for a roaſted joint with potatoes and vegetables to be occaſionally added to the bill of fare.

Children will no longer feel that craving appetite which at preſent too often ſucceeds a dinner of bacon or baked meat upon the preſent plan: They will always be ſatisfied, becauſe the ſtomach will be full.

The writer of theſe pages is inſtigated by no motive under Heaven but a deſire to add to the comfort of the labouring people, by making them acquainted with a good mode of living, which their habits of life has not given them acceſs to know.

It is reaſonable and proper in every point of view, that the poor man ſhould be inſtructed in every thing that can make his little earnings go as far as poſſible, or which can add to the comfort of himſelf and family: and this is the ſole object of the writer, who will conſider his labour on this occaſion well beſtowed,

if

if he can even in a ſmall degree be inſtrumental in introducing the mode of living which he now recommends, becauſe he is well aſſured it would, when once tried, rapidly gain ground, and thereby not only produce a conſiderable ſaving in the expence of every poor man's family, but add greatly to the comfort and health of a vaſt body of people.

It is well known that potatoes are the chief food of many of the northern counties of England, where the people are ſtrong, healthy, and happy, and where a knowledge of ſome of the modes of living, ſimilar to what is now ſuggeſted, enable them to live comfortably, and to rear and educate large families with decency, upon much ſmaller wages than the labouring poor in London receive.

Why therefore ſhould not they alſo be as comfortable and as eaſy in their circumſtances? Why ſhould they not determine to be leſs dependent on bread, which, in a large family, is at the cheapeſt time a moſt expenſive article, and follow the laudable example of the country by uſing a larger proportion of that excellent ſubſtitute *potatoes*, which is ſeldom above one ſixth part of the price of bread, and which may be dreſſed in ſo many different ways? The people have only to reſolve to make the experiment, and they will accompliſh their object, *and now is the time to do it.*

Potatoes may be uſed in Soups in the manner already deſcribed: they may alſo be eaten with ſalt-fiſh and butter, which is an excellent diſh: They may be alſo uſed in puddings, or with milk boiled, which is a moſt

a moſt, palatable cheap, and nouriſhing food both for young and old.

Potatoes may alſo be mixed up with flour and made into a moſt excellent, cheap, and palatable bread. Thoſe who know how to bake this kind of bread in their own houſes, may ſend loaves to the oven, which will feed their families at one third of the preſent price of Bread. Thus circumſtanced, while there are plenty of potatoes, (and thank God! there never was ſo great a crop as the preſent ſeaſon is likely to afford) the poor man has nothing to fear. On the contrary, he may rather rejoice at the preſent temporary ſcarcity of bread, (for it can only laſt a few weeks) if it ſhall be the means of leading the attention to a better, a more frugal, and a more wholeſome mode of living, ſo as to leave a portion of the annual earnings of a family for the purchaſe of decent cloaths; for the education of children; and to render the labouring people more independent of the pawnbroker's ſhop than they are at preſent, and where it is to be lamented, a conſiderable portion of their earnings center in the courſe of the year.

All this might be attained by following in a greater degree the mode of living practiſed in the country—by eating leſs bread and more potatoes, or potatoe puddings, and nouriſhing ſoups—by giving up in a great degree baked meats—by feeding children, and even grown people on milk porridge, or very thick gruel, called haſty-pudding, mixed with milk, or ſmall beer and molaſſes to breakfaſt, in the ſame

manner

manner the children of the higher ranks are generally fed, and this in place of bread and butter (the latter often ranſeid and bad) to breakfaſt, as is too generally the cuſtom at preſent, a diet which is doubly expenſive, and not half ſo nutritious or wholeſome, or even ſo palatable, as the ſort of breakfaſt which is now recommended.

It is here to be obſerved, that there is not a ſingle article of diet recommended to the labouring people, which the children of the higher ranks do not generally uſe and prefer: and happy would it be for themſelves and families, if they could only be perſuaded to underſtand the comforts which are the conſtant rewards of frugality.

Thoſe who feel ſo much diſcontent on account of the preſent high price of bread and meat, do not reflect that, *after all*, this country is ſupplied more abundantly at this preſent time, and probably at a cheaper rate, than any other country in Europe. No perſon will ſay that there has ever been any actual want, either of bread or meat, in the metropolis.—Thank God! there has always been enough both for the poor and the rich; and all ranks ought to be thankful that this has been the caſe, while it is known that ſuch diſtreſs prevails in France, and other parts of Europe, where it has often happened, that no money would purchaſe bread or even meat, becauſe none could be procured on any terms.

The poor of England have never been in this ſituation; there has hitherto been abundance of every thing

thing, although dearer than uſual: but where is the country in the world, where every preſſure upon the poor is ſo amply relieved by the rich as in England? —Are not their purſes opened upon every occaſion where real diſtreſs is to be found? and is not relief conſtantly adminiſtered with a degree of liberality, which is not to be found in any other nation in the world? This truth will not be denied, and it is a bleſſing for which the people cannot be ſufficiently grateful.

It is alſo great cauſe of thankfulneſs, that the very high advance on bread did not take place until a ſeaſon of the year when potatoes and vegetables were becoming abundant, ſo as to render it of much leſs conſequence in the conſumption of a family: for no perſon is ſo ignorant as not to know that in Yorkſhire, Lancaſhire, and many other parts of England, potatoes are the only bread of the people for the chief part of the year; and in Ireland, the great body of the nation live entirely on this excellent root, the nouriſhing qualities of which are proved by the health, ſtrength, and good appearance of all who make potatoes a general food.

While therefore we are ſure of having abundance of potatoes, neither the rich nor the poor have any thing at all to apprehend from the high price of bread. In a few weeks the harveſt will be general, and let us all be thankful that the proſpects in every part of the country are ſo abundant, as to give us encouragement to hope that in a ſhort time there will be a redundancy both of corn and vegetables, as well as meat of every

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ſort; for at no period in the memory of man, did the paſtures of England exhibit ſuch a luxuriant appearance as at preſent. This muſt and will unqueſtionably reduce the price of meat, for the country is full of cattle, and there is no cauſe for any alarm whatſoever, much leſs for a ſpirit of diſcontent manifeſted by tumultuous meetings. Of all expedients, this is the moſt wicked and dangerous for the comforts of the poor that could be reſorted to: for independent of all other bad conſequences which attend riotous aſſemblies, it is the readieſt and moſt obvious way to diſtreſs and ſtarve all ranks of the people, by frightening the Farmers and Graziers from bringing their cattle, corn, proviſions, and vegetables, to market; for who would venture their property in the metropolis, if they found it under the miſchievous influence of a mob-government?

Every individual, therefore, whatever his condition may be in life, becomes intereſted at all times, but particularly at this time, in preſerving the peace and good order of ſociety: while thoſe who are deluded into a contrary conduct, are the means of multiplying, by the worſt of crimes, thoſe diſtreſſes which would ariſe from any interruption to the free admiſſion of proviſions, ſo as to lower their prices to the poor, an event which will ſoon take place in the ordinary courſe of things.

London, 17th July,
1795.